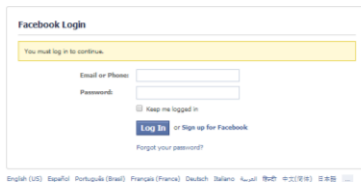


Local Government Facebook Pages: A How To Guide

With more than 1 billion active users, Facebook is the most widely-used social networking platform in the world. Facebook helps cities connect with residents and build community online. Facebook fan pages are used by many municipal governments to provide residents with information about government services and projects, local events, rules and regulations, and other relevant topics. It's also a forum to engage in a dialogue with residents, garner feedback, and strengthen relationships with the community.

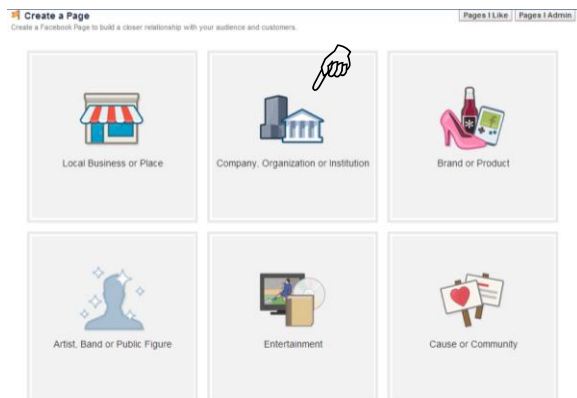
Here's an easy guide on how to get started:

(1) Go to Facebook.com/page.

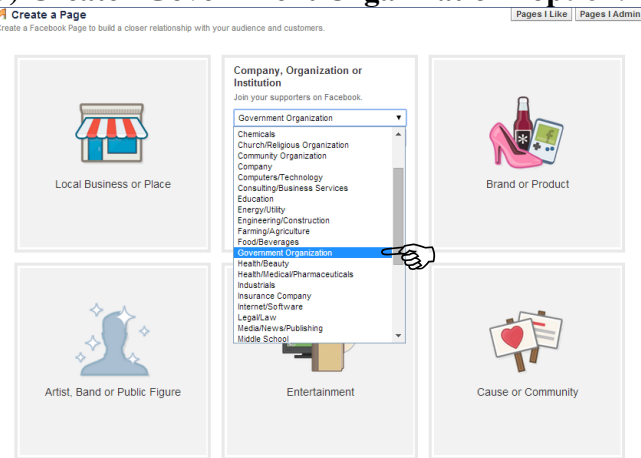


To sign up for the account use your city/county office email, and set up a Password. Make sure to write this down and keep it in the office and share with others who may be posting updates on the page.

(2) Select "Company, Organization or Institution".



(3) Create "Government Organization" option.



(4) Create the page name and profile pic.

It should be easily identifiable, include city name in it, and the word "gov" or "city." Be consistent; try to use the same username throughout all social media. For the name, it is suggested to use the shortened version for the page name.

Choose “Add or edit images” to set up the profile pic. You can use the official seal and a compelling local picture or landmark.

Note: As you create the page, you can choose “Do not make Page publicly visible at this time.” it remains unpublished (not visible to the public) until you choose to publish it. You will be able to edit and publish later.

Here are some tips to help you use Facebook:

– Once you've created a page.

- Be sure you're acting under the page name, and then select "Edit Page" on the admin panel.
- Select "Admin Roles." Be sure and add other administrators to the page to help in managing the page.
- Provide basic “About Us” information, and link to your city’s website. Also include some text saying that this page is the "official" page for the city.
- Choose a username: facebook.com/username. Example: facebook.com/nycgov.
- There are two primary viewpoints: “Timeline” and “News Feed”
- The “Timeline” is a collection of photos, updates, and interactions between you and your community. This is where you add content to share with your fans.
- The “News Feed” is an aggregate of updates from other organizations, businesses, and people that you have selected to follow. You can share these messages with your own followers by clicking on “Share.”

– Post a variety of content and engage your citizens.

- Don't rely exclusively on text or photos; mix up the content mediums. Rotate through text, articles, video, and photos.
- Make your posts informative and fun.
- Post street closures and upcoming fairs or festivals.
- Post pictures of the community.
- Use “Notes” to write messages or lengthy posts

– Public services announcements.

Make sure important public service announcements are reaching your Facebook users.



– Events.

You can set your page to include Events tab, this way fans can see a chronological list of everything happening. Civic activities and other events are kept up-to-date here.



– Interact with your community.

- Respond to comments made on your posts or on your wall. Also, make comments on posts of those fan pages you follow.
- Share relevant links from a page you follow, or post links, articles, pictures, or videos that are relevant to your residents.
- When someone posts to your timeline and is looking for a response, a response is necessary.
- Use Facebook's built-in analytics, accessible via the admin panel, to get a better idea about which content is driving traffic and shared most. Use the learning to share more inspiring content.
- Utilize "Facebook questions"
 - You can utilize "Facebook questions" from the "Share" menu to gain insights, get feedback, and encourage participation by community members.
 - How to set up a question poll: facebook.com/help/facebook-questions.

References & Helpful Links

U.S. Department of Commerce's Guide for Creating Government Facebook Pages:

www.osec.doc.gov/webresources/socialmedia/govt_page_setup.pdf.

"Reaching and Engaging the Public" by Amy DeWolk on govloop.com:

<http://www.govloop.com/group/digitalcommunication/forum/topics/reaching-and-engaging-the-public>

GovDelivery.com's Guide for Creating Stakeholder Engagement:

www.govdelivery.com/engage

How to Build an Awesome Government Facebook Page with Tons of Fans and Engagement - GovLoop - Knowledge Network for Government

www.govloop.com/profiles/blogs/how-to-build-an-awesome

10 Ways Facebook Pages can help Local Governments Better Service their Constituents:

www.insidefacebook.com/2009/11/05/10-ways-facebook-pages-can-help-local-governments-better-serve-their-constituents/